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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Righteous God, lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Set our lawmakers on safe paths, protecting them from dangers seen and unseen. Preserve them and their loved ones, doing for them more than they can ask or imagine. Provide our Senators with counsel even in the night seasons, that they may prevail against the evil forces that seek to destroy our Nation and world. As they trust Your loving kindness, may their hearts rejoice in Your salvation. Lord, deal bountifully with them and the members of their staffs.

We pray in Your marvelous Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HELLER). The majority leader is recognized.

EVERY CHILD ACHIEVES ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the pundits told us it would never happen. Republicans and Democrats will never agree on a way to replace No Child Left Behind, they said. But a new Senate that is back to work is proving them wrong. We are poised to pass bipartisan

legislation that will replace an education law that no longer works with significant education reforms that will work.

It is a bipartisan bill that would take decisionmaking power away from distant Federal bureaucrats and empower parents, teachers, States, and school boards instead. It is a bipartisan bill that would end the practice of States being coerced into adopting measures such as Common Core. It is a bipartisan bill that would substitute one-size-fits-all Washington mandates for greater State and local flexibility.

Because the needs of a student in Kentucky aren't likely to be the same as the needs of a student in Montana or California, this is a bill that would clear the way for educational standards and programs to be designed with the needs of local students in mind. In short, the Every Child Achieves Act is aimed at helping students succeed instead of helping Washington grow.

I urge colleagues to join me in passing it soon. That would be a big achievement for our kids, and it would be another reminder of what is possible in a Senate that is back to work for the American people.

After all, what did our constituents see in this debate? They saw Senators they sent to Washington, regardless of party, having their voices heard. They saw Senators working across the aisle. They saw Senators of both parties offering amendment after amendment and then voting to adopt many of them.

On this bill alone, the new Senate has already taken rollcall votes on 17 amendments. We expect to take up to 6 more today. Just to put that in perspective, the new Senate will have taken more amendment rollcall votes on this single bill alone than the old Senate took all of last year on all bills combined. That is something we should all want to celebrate because it means the voices of the American people are being heard again here in the Senate.

So I want to thank the senior Senators from Tennessee and Washington for all of their hard work on this bill. Their continued dedication helped to lead us to the point where we are today.

I also want to acknowledge the efforts of the House of Representatives on this issue. The Republican-led House passed legislation to address this issue the past few years, but the old Senate did not act. This year the Senate, under new management, is poised to finally do its job. We look forward to going to conference with the House on this issue.

But first, we must pass the bill before us. So let's keep the productive momentum going. Let's pass this bill, and let's replace No Child Left Behind once and for all.

After all, we have already seen how States such as Kentucky have been able to achieve more success by obtaining just a limited amount of flexibility from the current law via conditional waivers. Just imagine what Kentucky and other States can achieve when fully empowered to do what is right for their students.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Now, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, the vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to H.R. 22 occur at 2:15 p.m. on Tuesday, July 21.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE HIGHWAY BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, let me just say to all Senators that we are making progress on the highway bill, and we are setting the vote for next Tuesday to allow the bipartisan supporters of a longer term bill a couple of days to complete the draft substitute.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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